

THE BRITISH AND THEIR TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS

It`s nearly Christmas and people all over the world look forward to this festive season. People get into a Christmas spirit too early because unfortunately it is over commercialized and the shops are packed with all Christmas decoration and ornaments. But still, we just love all the craziness around Christmas, don`t we?

In Britain Christmas traditions is all about celebration, decoration and food. But let`s not forget the children. From the 1st of December to the 24th of December children have advent calendars which they open every day. Behind the doors are chocolates or tiny bits and pieces which make children count down to Christmas. Children write a letter to Father Christmas with a list of all the presents they want to receive.

The British just love Christmas jumpers. They must be bright, colourful and very festive with different Christmas images such as snowmen, snowflakes, reindeers, holly and you can see people wearing them throughout December.

It`s tradition to put up a Christmas tree and decorate it with lights, baubles or ornaments and many other tiny objects such as angels, feathery birds, the human imagination is endless.

Another tradition is pantomimes – pantos for short. These are musical comedies, based on children`s fairy tales, which are performed in theatres around the UK. There is a lot of interaction between the audience and the performance. They are great fun for the families which get them into the spirit.

In most countries the big day is Christmas Day, which is the 25th of December but on Christmas Eve the day before, every child puts out a Christmas stocking under the Christmas tree or by the bed so when they wake up the first present is inside that stocking. On the night before Christmas some people go to Midnight mass where they sing Christmas songs.

Christmas Eve is the night when Father Christmas comes and brings presents for the children. And if he`s lucky, he might find some treats for himself such as a glass of brandy or some mince pies.

The main event on Christmas day is opening the presents all morning long, followed by a traditional Christmas meal. But before the feast begins, they have to open the Christmas crackers. They are paper cylinders that are pulled from each end until they make a bang. Inside each cracker is a joke, a toy and a paper hat in a form of a crown. And this crown has to be worn during the Christmas meal. It`s tradition to eat turkey, roast potatoes, vegetables e.g. carrots, peas, brussel sprouts, gravy for the meat or cranberry sauce, some bread stuffing, pigs in blankets (sausages wrapped in bacon) and Christmas pudding which many people aren`t particularly fond of, but it`s a tradition. At 3 p.m. the Queen has a short speech on TV where she addresses the main events of the year.

The day after Christmas Day is a so called Boxing day. Workers used to receive Christmas boxes from their bosses, but nowadays it is all about shopping and sport. It is also a tradition to take down the Christmas tree within 12 days of Christmas otherwise people will have bad luck all year.

But keep in mind that Christmas is special, because we spend it with the people we love.

Have a wonderful Christmas!

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